THE BIRD OF MIND

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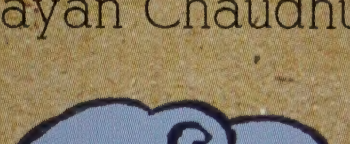
Translation
Sayan Chaudhuri

Illustrations
Samaresh Chatterjee



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Summer holidays have come. Piklu doesn't have to go to school. Still he wakes up early in the morning. Rubbing his eyes he comes out in the garden. The bird of his mind feels restless because the chirping of birds wakes him every morning. His eyes begin to search the garden for them. At a careful glance he is able to spot a magpie, then a sparrow, a bulbul, a parrot, and many other birds. One by one they greet him. Piklu begins to count them one, two, three... He moves further and comes out of the gate. Suddenly two yellow beaked Shaliks fly over his head. Piklu becomes happy.

Piklu claps his hands with joy. The flowers swing their heads as if nodding in happiness. He can hear the bees humming with joy. As the sun moves on, the day passes by and night falls.

Next day at dawn when everybody is deep in sleep, Piklu sees a small Mynah fluttering in the bird cage. Its leg tied tightly with a chain. He is surprised and wonders who could tie the chain! Piklu runs to his mother for an answer.

He learns that it was caught by his own elder brother Toton from a nearby forest. Piklu notices that the bird is sad and does not eat anything. Once in a while it gives out a sad cry.

Piklu too feels sad for the bird. Hearing the Mynah cry, no bird comes to their garden. He wonders what to do? Then an idea strikes his mind. He brings a chair, gets on it and unlocks the cage.

As he unlocks the cage, the bird looks at him with joy. Piklu opens the chain tied to its leg and caresses the bird softly. Then he calls his mother who comes with ointment. Mother applies some to the bird's wounded leg.

Mynah feels better and smiles at Piklu. He lovingly teases Mynah and she breaks into a beautiful song. Other birds begin to fly into their garden. There are different birds all over the place.

Mynah moves to the garden to climb up a tree, she jumps from one branch to another. Finally, she flies out moving higher and still higher into the vast expanse of the blue sky.

The red sun shines on the eastern sky. The flowers of the garden are blessed with the morning light. Dragonflies dance around. Bees and butterflies flutter over the colourful flowers. They too seem happy.

But Piklu is worried. Will the Mynah find her mother? Does she know the way to her home. . . ?

Next day, early in the morning Piklu hears someone calling him by his name. He rushes out. Mynah is sitting with her mother on the branch of a *Tagar* tree.

He calls his father, mother, brother and shouts with joy! Hip, hip hoorray! Piklu feels elated as the bird of his mind flies majestically to meet the bird of nature.

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